

NEW JERSEY SOLONS ASK FOR FREE TIME

Both houses of the state legislature seek periods on radio and tv stations, apparently to answer governor's program.

DILEMMA of broadcasters in the issue of free radio and television time for political groups was spotlighted again last week when the New Jersey State Legislature voted to seek free time from stations in the state for a "non-partisan" report of its activities. Its action was embodied in a resolution which characterized such a report as "an important public service."

The resolution directed that the president of the Senate and the speaker of the Assembly "appoint three members from each body, including representatives of both parties, to confer with the individual television and radio stations concerning their interest in making such a program available to their listeners."

Before the resolution was approved Monday night, State Sen. Malcolm S. Forbes (R.-Somerset), who introduced the measure, held a news conference with radio newsmen and newspapermen. It was reported that newsmen brought out that the implication was strong that the legislature was not so interested in carrying programs on proceedings in the chambers but was seeking time to answer statements made by Democratic Gov. Robert Meyner on his "free time" report to the state carried on WATV (TV) and WAAT-FM Newark (Sun., 7-7:30 p.m.), and made available by a "feed" to all radio stations requesting it.

A broadcasting industry representative said as soon as the first program was concluded on March 14, GOP leaders in the legislature asked for time to reply, charging that the program was "partisan." Each of the stations carrying the program, he said, considered the request and turned it down. The position of most broadcasters, he added, is that "any such program would have to stand on its own merits and not be used as a device to reply to the governor."

The implications of the resolution for free time are far-reaching for broadcasters, he said, pointing out they will be faced with "the alternative of either providing time or facing local political pressures." He said that it may well result in station broadcasters taking "a much stricter approach to the granting of free time for politicians for non-political programs."

Sen. Johnson Broadens Scope Of Baseball Monopoly Bill

IN A MOVE apparently aimed at getting a more favorable reception from the Justice Dept., Sen. Edwin C. Johnson (D-Colo.) has introduced a substitute measure dealing with monopoly in baseball.

His original resolution (S J Res 133) would have required any professional baseball club owned by a beer or liquor company to come under the anti-trust laws [B•T, March 1].

That resolution has been amended to "make the anti-trust laws applicable to professional baseball clubs affiliated with corporations subject to the anti-trust laws."

Sen. Johnson, when testifying before the Senate Anti-Monopoly Subcommittee a fortnight ago [B•T, March 22], indicated he planned to broaden his request to include other corporations in addition to breweries who acquire baseball clubs for tax concessions and advertising.

Sen. Johnson has fired his attacks at the An-

heuser-Busch acquisition of the St. Louis Cardinals, alleging use of radio coverage of the games to advertise the product to the detriment of the small brewery while obtaining tax deductions both for the advertising and the operation of the baseball club.

Meanwhile, National League President Warren Giles praised the owners of the Cardinals and other industrialists who own ball clubs. In a statement which was an obvious reply to Sen. Johnson's allegation that Cardinal ownership was "a beer peddling advertising scheme" for Anheuser-Busch, Mr. Giles said:

All this talk about big commercial interests owning ball clubs to the detriment of the game is "poppy cock." Baseball and baseball owners are being made targets for unjustified and unfair public criticism. . . .

Among "industrialists who have done so much for the game," Mr. Giles referred to "Gus Busch" [August A. Busch Jr. of the Cardinals].

Stanton Sees President

FRANK STANTON, CBS president, conferred Thursday at the White House Executive Office with President Eisenhower. He declined to discuss the purpose of his visit, replying to questioning newsmen, "I am awfully sorry, but I have nothing to say."

'Newsweek' Looks at Radio-Tv Editorializing

HOW far should radio and television go in editorialized comment and what should the rules be?

These questions, brought into sharp focus by Edward R. Murrow's *See It Now* programs (CBS-TV, Tues., 10:30-11 p.m. EST.) on Sen. Joseph R. McCarthy (R-Wis.), are explored in the March 29 *Newsweek* magazine. To obtain a cross-section of opinion, the magazine queried top executives at the four television networks, 14 major tv stations officials and FCC. Comments quoted by *Newsweek* were as follows:

William S. Paley and Frank Stanton, chairman of the board of directors and president, respectively, of CBS: "In the pattern of mass communications, as part of the fabric of freedom, we believe that a broadcasting station or network has the same right to editorialize and the same right to independent expression as the free press . . . that the suppression of opinion and independent thought—whether it be in print or over the air waves—limits public understanding.

"When a station or network exercises its right to editorialize, however, it is vitally important for it to separate opinion from news. Opinions should be clearly labeled as such. The listener is entitled to know what he is receiving, news or opinion, and if it be opinion, whose opinion. . . .

Must Exercise Judgment

"But the execution of policy cannot be reduced to mathematical formula or even to a set of rigid rules which are self-executing and will cover all possible circumstances. In achieving fairness and balance, the exercise of judgment by station or network management to assure fair play must control. . . . Fairness is not assured by self-sterilization—by being so frightened or nervous of the powerful impact of the medium that opinions are required to die before utterance. . . .

"The fact that the air belongs to the people is irrelevant in this context. So do the mails through which the printed medium finds much of its circulation, yet no one suggests that this warrants a policy of forbidding

Fort Worth Contest Follows Hartford Tack

PROCEDURAL dispute similar to the hotly contested Hartford ch. 3 television case has arisen in the Fort Worth ch. 11 proceeding as Fort Worth Television Co. seeks extensive background information on competitor Texas State Network and the latter's chief owner, oilman Sid Richardson, and his business partner, Amon Carter.

In a protest pleading filed with the Commission last week, Texas State Network opposed the Fort Worth Television request on the grounds it is not specific and represents a "fishing expedition" into the non-radio business affairs of Messrs. Richardson and Carter which are not relevant. Fort Worth Television's request was made before Examiner Annie N. Hunting March 12 in a hearing conference on the applicants' proposed points of reliance for their respective cases.

Mr. Carter, among other business interests, is principal owner of the *Fort Worth Star Telegram*. He has no interests in Texas State Network, which operates KFJZ there as well as KRIO McAllen and WACO Waco.

Texas State Network asserted that a front-

newspapers or magazine editorials."

Thomas F. O'Neil, president and chairman of the board of Mutual: "We, as station owners, have never attempted to establish an editorial policy analogous to the editorial page of a newspaper, but we feel that any attempt to prevent individual commentators from expressing their interpretation of local, national or international events would be a disservice to the public. . . ."

Robert E. Kintner, president of ABC: "Local station managers still don't editorialize very much, and no network is going to editorialize just because the president or the board chairman has certain views on a subject. The situation is not analogous to a newspaper's because there is no one place on the air to editorialize as there is in a paper . . . there is more to be concerned about in reaching decisions about television because of its impact. But no one is going to be able to use radio or tv facilities as demagogues."

Ted Bergmann, managing director of the DuMont Television Network: "On DuMont news programs, we strive to present a true and accurate picture of men and events of the day. Our news editors and newscasters are under instruction to make their newscasts as objective, as factual, and as comprehensive as humanly possible. But the bare outline—the headlines of the day—such as can be set forth in a five- or a 15-minute newscast is not enough."

Rosel H. Hyde, chairman of the FCC: "I believe editorializing on tv is acceptable, consistent with the Commission's opinion that it should be fair and impartial. The question of the radio-tv commentators versus anyone who does not have the same skill at using the medium boils down to a matter of fair play."

NBC, according to *Newsweek*, declined to comment.

In a poll of 14 major television stations, the magazine added, nine held that the medium should be "strictly impartial," and five indicated a belief that radio and television ought to editorialize.